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U. S. Department of Agriculture

### Fourteen Pointers on Making Good Lawns

FOURTEEN steps are necessary in making a good lawn.

1. Before excavation is started for the house, the top 5 or 6 inches of soil should be pushed off to one side until the building and grading operations are completed. Afterward, the topsoil should be spread evenly over the surface of the lawn. Some topsoils may be little better than the subsoil, but in most cases it is worth saving.
2. Building debris - plaster, stones, trash - should be removed, not buried.
3. The subgrade should be sloped away from the house. Terraces should be avoided if possible; slopes should be gradual to the sidewalk. A gentle slope away from the house will carry off water and reduce the risk of a damp basement.
4. If, in grading and leveling, the surface is raised around shade trees, provision should be made to protect the trees. Shallow wells of brick or stonework should be built around the trunks of the trees to allow air to reach the roots. Deep layers of soil around the trunk of a tree may kill it.
5. In establishing the subgrade, special attention should be given to spots that are likely to be poorly drained. Sometimes tile may be necessary. The advice of competent authorities should be sought in putting in tile drains.
6. After the subgrade has been finished, about 75 pounds of lime (if soil tests show the need) and 25 pounds of basic slag per 1,000 square feet should be harrowed or spaded into the subsoil to a depth of 3 or 4 inches. The lawn begins with the subsoil.
7. The topsoil should then be replaced and graded.
8. Lime, fertilizer, and other amendments, such as organic matter (peat manure, compost, spent mushroom soil, and so on) should be incorporated into the topsoil before the finish grade is established. For many lawnmakers, cost and availability may determine the amounts. If one cannot get an analysis of degree of acidity from his county agent, State experiment station, or State department of agriculture, or if he does not test the soil himself with a soil test kit, a rough rule of thumb in the eastern half of the country is to apply 75 pounds of ground limestone on 1,000 square feet. Plenty of balanced fertilizer is needed - say 25 to 50 pounds of a commercial fertilizer of 5-10-5 analysis.
9. The surface should be smoothed by raking and rolling.
10. Then seeding, sodding, or sprigging may be done, depending upon the type of grass to be used and the rapidity of cover desired. Because of its relatively high cost, sodding is recommended only when there is need for rapid completion of the job.

## CHAPTER 10. THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES IS A STORY OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

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Hand sowing of seed is usually the most satisfactory method of securing a complete and uniform coverage on a small lawn. The seed may be diluted by mixing it with soil or fertilizer. It should be divided in two lots. One lot should be broadcast while walking lengthwise of the area and the other lot should be sown while walking at right angles to the direction of the first sowing. The seed should be covered lightly by raking.

11. Light rolling will press the seed gently into the soil where it will be encouraged to germinate in the shortest possible time.

12. Spreading a bale of straw or hay to 1,000 square feet on slopes will reduce erosion, conserve moisture, and facilitate establishment. It seldom is necessary to remove the mulch. Special types of netting also may be purchased to protect new seedlings.

13. New seedlings (or sod or sprigs) may be complete failures unless adequate moisture is available constantly during the period of establishment. Watering need only be light, but it must be frequent enough to avoid drying of the surface soil where the new tender rootlets are gaining a foothold.

14. Mowing should be started as soon as there is enough top growth to cut with the mower set at the proper height for the principal species of grass planted. Delayed mowing, so that the grass blades bend over and become matted, should be avoided.

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